

THE ORIGINAL SOUND TRACK RECORDING

**A BOY NAMED
CHARLIE BROWN
VINCE GUARALDI
TRIO**



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CD
JZM
BOYN
BNC
F18

06/17

- 1 **OH, GOOD GRIEF** 2:21
 - 2 **PEBBLE BEACH** 2:47
 - 3 **HAPPINESS IS** 3:37
 - 4 **SCHROEDER** 1:51
 - 5 **CHARLIE BROWN THEME** 4:20
 - 6 **LINUS AND LUCY** 3:03
 - 7 **BLUE CHARLIE BROWN** 7:26
 - 8 **BASEBALL THEME** 3:13
 - 9 **FREDA** 4:31
(WITH THE NATURALLY CURLY HAIR)
- BONUS TRACKS:**
- 10 **FLY ME TO THE MOON*** 8:55
 - 11 **BASEBALL THEME**
(ALTERNATE TAKE)** 1:56

*not on original album **previously unreleased



VINCE GUARALDI—PIANO
MONTY BUDWIG—BASS
COLIN BAILEY—DRUMS

The original soundtrack recording. Recorded in 1964.

Recorded and originally released in 1964, *A Boy Named Charlie Brown* is the soundtrack of the first documentary to relocate Charles Schulz's *Peanuts* characters from the comic strips to film. The simplicity of the animation and the freshness of the music perfectly captured Charlie Brown, Linus, Lucy, Schroeder, Snoopy, and the other Schulz characters. Vince Guaraldi, a deeply insightful musician with large quotients of childlike wonder and fun, was the perfect choice to provide music for the film, as he did for subsequent *Peanuts* specials. Could there be a more apt musical sketch of the relationship between a beleaguered little brother and his hectoring big sister than "Linus and Lucy," a more succinct expression of Schroeder's musical longings than "Schroeder" (complete with little finger fluffs)? As Guaraldi plays "Oh, Good Grief," we can practically hear Charlie Brown say it. But Guaraldi, Monty Budwig, and Colin Bailey aren't just giving us program music. Fifty years later, the album stands on its own as a collection of delightful jazz performances.



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FRIENDS
OF ACPL

ABT

STEREO

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JAZZ IMPRESSIONS of "A BOY NAMED

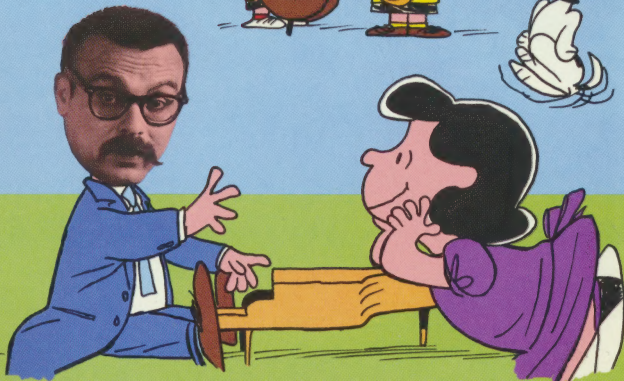


HIGH FIDELITY

CHARLIE BROWN™

Vince Guaraldi Trio

ORIGINAL
SOUND
TRACK

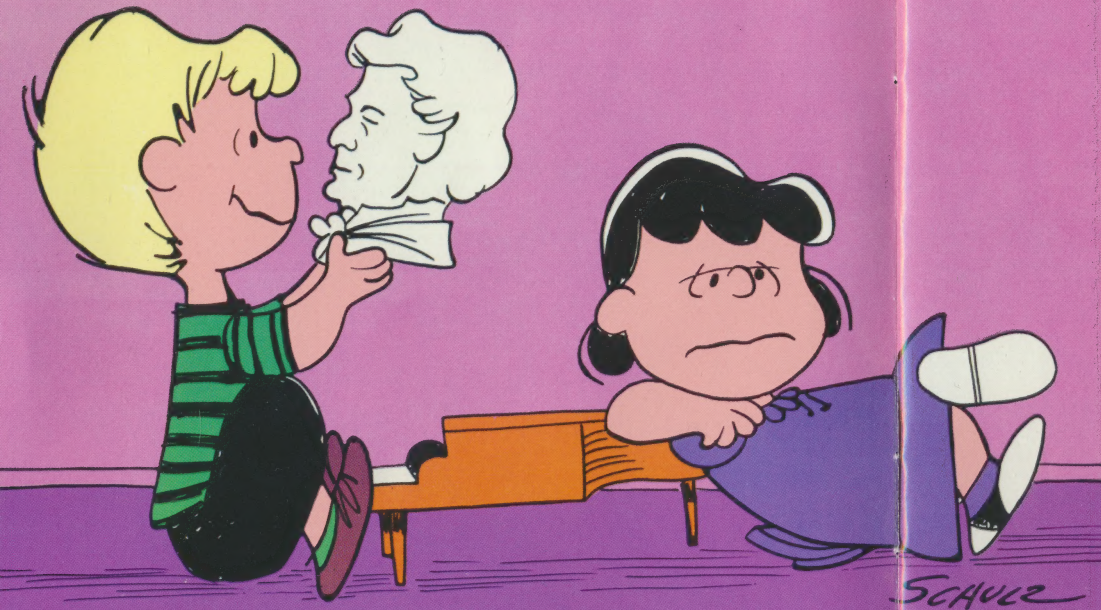


SCARZ



V. H. 12. 12.

SCHULZ



All selections composed by **Vince Guaraldi**,
except as indicated.

VINCE GUARALDI—piano
MONTY BUDWIG—bass
COLIN BAILEY—drums

The original soundtrack recording.
Recorded in 1964.

A PIANO PLAYER NAMED VINCE

It started with a phone call.

Well ... technically, it started with a drive across

San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge.

Wait, no: It *actually* started with Willie Mays.

But we'll get to the Golden Gate Bridge. And that

all-important phone call.

On October 6, 1963, television director/producer Lee Mendelson watched happily as the debut documentary from his new company — a valentine to the beloved San Francisco Giants center fielder, titled *A Man Named Mays* — delivered strong ratings for NBC, despite landing in a challenging Sunday evening timeslot directly opposite a much more highly publicized CBS special, *Elizabeth Taylor in London*.

A thoroughly delighted New York critic called Mendelson's documentary "a surprise and a joy ... with one-tenth the budget [of Taylor's special] but ten times the artistic result ... the television sleeper of the season."

Mendelson, flushed by success, contemplated his next move.

Years later, when asked how he finally settled on his sophomore effort, Mendelson responded with a well-practiced comeback: "I decided, having done a program on the world's best baseball player, that I should do the world's worst: Charlie Brown."

That laugh line makes light of what was, at the time, a serious effort on Mendelson's part to develop a "day in the life"-type documentary around *Peanuts* creator Charles M. Schulz. As initially announced in the *San Francisco Chronicle* on March 13, 1964, *A Man*

Called Charlie Brown would be written, directed and produced by Mendelson. The 60-minute feature would profile Schulz at work and at home: driving his children to school, answering fan mail, and (of course!) sketching examples of Charlie Brown, Snoopy and the rest of the *Peanuts* gang.

Mendelson also wanted to include some animated segments: an assignment he handed to Bill Melendez, who had collaborated with Schulz on a series of enormously successful (but now largely forgotten) early 1960s *Peanuts* TV commercials for Ford automobiles.

As the March 1964 issue of *San Francisco Magazine* further elaborated, the documentary would feature guest appearances by notables such as Bing Crosby, Willie Mays, Dean Martin, Arnold Palmer and Frank Sinatra. KSFO-AM 560's Don Sherwood would narrate, and — according to a press release generated soon thereafter — "Vince Guaraldi, of Westlake, [would] compose and perform an original score."

But how had Mendelson settled on Guaraldi?

The filmmaker knew that he wanted a jazz score ("I had always loved jazz, going back to Art Tatum"), but *finding one* proved difficult.

"I first called Dave Brubeck, who's an old friend, but he was busy," Mendelson recalled, during a 2003 interview. "He suggested I call Cal Tjader, with whom I went to high school, but *he* was busy.

"Years later, they both said they wished they hadn't been busy!"

(Tjader never had an opportunity to recover from that ill-advised refusal, but Brubeck was more fortunate; he scored "The NASA Space Station," an episode of the eight-part 1988 TV miniseries, *This Is America, Charlie Brown*.)

Not sure who to try next, Mendelson was driving over the Golden Gate Bridge one day, listening to a KSFO show hosted by Al "Jazzbo" Collins. "He'd play Vince's stuff a lot," Mendelson recalled, "and right then he played 'Cast Your Fate to the Wind.' It was melodic and open, and came in like a breeze off the bay. And it struck me that this might be the kind of music I was looking for."

Mendelson and Guaraldi met for lunch at the popular San Francisco restaurant, Original Joe's, and a partnership was born.

So there you go: first Willie Mays, and then the trip across the Golden Gate Bridge.

The fateful phone call came roughly two weeks after Guaraldi and Mendelson enjoyed that lunch.

"Vince called me," Mendelson laughs. "He told me, 'I gotta play something for you; it just came into my head.' I said, 'I don't want to hear it on the phone, because you don't hear the highs and lows; let me come down to the studio.' And he said, 'I gotta play it for you, before I forget it, so at least you'll remember it.' So I said, 'Okay, fine; play it.'

"And that was the first time I heard 'Linus and Lucy.'

"It just blew me away. It was so right — *so perfect* — for Charlie Brown and the other characters. Vince's music was the one missing ingredient that would make everything happen."

To this day, Mendelson insists that he knew — really *knew* — that Guaraldi had been the right choice:

"I have no idea why, but I knew that song would affect my entire life. There's no doubt in my mind, that if we hadn't had that Guaraldi score, we wouldn't have had the franchise we later enjoyed."

Easy to say, in hindsight. At the time, though,

Mendelson ran into a most unexpected snag once he completed the documentary that had been retitled *A Boy Named Charlie Brown*.

Nobody wanted it.

All three networks — NBC, CBS and ABC — turned Mendelson down. It's impossible to imagine today, but nobody had the slightest desire to bring Charlie Brown to television. Not for the first time in his life, poor ol' Chuck had been rejected.

Mendelson tried everything; he even went back to the editing bay and trimmed his film to what he hoped might be a more network-friendly 30 minutes. The guest appearances by Crosby, Martin, Sinatra and Palmer wound up on the cutting-room floor, as did several of Guaraldi's freshly composed themes.

The results were no different; Mendelson couldn't give the film away. It never aired on television, and remained in limbo until the early 21st century, when the newly opened Charles M. Schulz Museum issued the 30-minute edit on DVD.

In late 1964, though, Fantasy Records guru Max Weiss was a *very* unhappy camper.

Fantasy had contracted for a soundtrack for this planned TV special; Guaraldi had obliged by heading down to Southern California, where on Oct. 26 he reunited with former colleagues Monty Budwig (bass) and Colin Bailey (drums), to rerecord the songs that the pianist had written for *A Boy Named Charlie Brown*. Fantasy did its part by turning the album package into a double-fold, full-color masterpiece that incorporated plenty of Schulz artwork and essays by Mendelson and *San Francisco Chronicle* columnist Ralph Gleason, one of Guaraldi's closest friends and most enthusiastic boosters.

As an added bonus, the package included 12 full-color sketches by Schulz, as frame-ready 8-by-10 posters.

By any label's standards, this was an impressive production; coming from the budget-conscious Weiss, it was unprecedented.

(If you're reading these words as a vinyl record fan who eagerly purchased the LP edition of this 50th anniversary rerelease, please note that every measure has been taken to include all the elements that made the initial 1964 first edition so special. The one significant change, aside from this essay, is that Guaraldi's music has been recorded onto orange vinyl: a nod to the label's 1950s and early '60s marketing gimmick of releasing LPs on colored vinyl, usually red or blue.)

Mendelson visited Fantasy one afternoon, and wound up helping Weiss, Saul Zaentz and other Fantasy staffers stuff all those 8-by-10 posters into the waiting gatefold albums of what had come to be known as *Jazz Impressions of A Boy Named Charlie Brown* (a title undoubtedly selected in the hopes that it would duplicate Guaraldi's previous success, with his "Jazz Impressions" of *Black Orpheus*).

Guaraldi went back to work, at that time roughly midway through his enormously successful two-year partnership with guitarist Bola Sete: an artistic collaboration that was the hot ticket in the greater San Francisco area from March 1964 through February 1966.

A two-week gig at Berkeley's Hotel Claremont, in January 1965, found Guaraldi and Sete supported by bassist Tom Beeson and drummer Benny Barth. The booking served as an extended album release party for *Jazz Impressions of A Boy Named Charlie Brown*, which

Billboard had tagged as a "Jazz Special Merit Pick." *Peanuts* character dolls and copies of the hot-off-the-press album were awarded each evening, as door prizes.

Popular as the album became, however, Weiss and Fantasy never enjoyed the promotional "bump" they had expected from a television airing. No doubt this contributed to the decision to issue later pressings of the album, now titled simply *A Boy Named Charlie Brown*, in a conventional package lacking Gleason's essay and those charming Schulz posters. And consider the historical irony: This must be one of the few times (the only time?) that a record label has released a soundtrack album for a film *never granted public exposure*.

Consider, as well, that most of America first heard Guaraldi's iconic "Linus and Lucy" on December 9, 1965, when *A Charlie Brown Christmas* debuted on CBS-TV. Dr. Funk's fans, however, had been enjoying that tune — and all the others on *Jazz Impressions of A Boy Named Charlie Brown* — for an entire year. Indeed, San Francisco-area jazz club patrons had been snapping their fingers to Guaraldi's bouncy *Peanuts* themes for at least six months prior to that, since mid-1964!

The surviving edit of Mendelson's documentary features portions of five Guaraldi compositions: "Oh, Good Grief," "Happiness Is," "Baseball Theme," "Schroeder" and the all-important "Linus and Lucy." Sharp-eared listeners also will catch three brief stretches of unidentifiable improvis — at 03:27, 07:21 and 10:32, if you're curious enough to cue up the DVD — and, at this late stage, we can only wonder what they might have been from.

Music historians familiar with early 20th century

honky-tonk rags no doubt smiled the first time they heard "Oh, Good Grief," a familiar melody that had been used in other pop contexts prior to being "borrowed" by Guaraldi, most memorably as a song titled "(Down at) Papa Joe's," written by Jerry Dean Smith and turned into a 1963 Top 10 hit by The Dixiebelles (and, a bit later, memorably performed by several chickens in a July 1977 episode of TV's *The Muppet Show*).

The waltz-time "Baseball Theme" is heard behind a sequence devoted to poor Chuck's hapless efforts on the pitcher's mound — and the equally incompetent antics of his outfielders — as the documentary's narrator reminds us that Charlie Brown's team has lost 983 straight games. Jazz fans will appreciate this remastered edition's special treat: an alternate take of "Baseball Theme," whose gentler tempo more closely approximates the version heard in the documentary. Guaraldi's keyboard chops are prominent in both versions, of course, but note how remastering engineer Joe Tarantino has brought up Budwig's equally deft bass work.

We also can only speculate how the album's remaining tracks were employed in the film's longer edit. "Pebble Beach," a joyful bossa nova piece with a nimble piano bridge, no doubt augmented Arnold Palmer's unused segment; the delightfully bouncy "Freda (with the Naturally Curly Hair)" obviously would have accompanied one of that narcissistic little girl's animated appearances. But what about the "Charlie Brown Theme" or the melancholy, deliciously groovy lament, "Blue Charlie Brown"? How were they used?

Not one to waste a great track, Guaraldi later employed "Pebble Beach" as part of the score for

'67 *West*, a short promotional film for *Sunset* magazine that Mendelson made in 1967. The tune also gained a new title — "Housewife Theme" — when Guaraldi once again revived it as part of the score for 1968's *He's Your Dog, Charlie Brown*.

"Linus and Lucy," of course, has become ubiquitous these days, often (incorrectly) titled "The Peanuts Theme" by adoring mainstream fans who recognize the music but don't know the proper title, and likely don't know Guaraldi's name, either ... and probably pronounce it incorrectly if they *do* know it.

But the song itself immediately evokes images of a lovable blockhead, an anthropomorphic beagle, a loud-mouthed fussy budget, a blanket-toting philosopher, a musician who coaxes impossibly complex symphonies from a toy piano further restricted by painted black keys, and all the other members of the *Peanuts* gang.

That's a pretty impressive legacy, for a tune Lee Mendelson first heard on the telephone.

Derrick Bang

February 2014

— *Derrick Bang's book-length career study of Guaraldi, Vince Guaraldi at the Piano, was published by McFarland Press in March 2012*



Reissue Produced by **Nick Phillips**

Remastering: **Joe Tarantino**

Liner Notes: **Derrick Bang**

Package Design: **Andrew Pham**

Project Assistance: **Bill Belmont,**

Chris Clough, Rebecca Deshpande,

Ryan Jebavy, Pollyanna Kwok,

Evelyn Mowbray, Sig Sigworth,

Brian Schuman

All original album tracks (#1-9), plus the previously-unreleased alternate take of "Baseball Theme" (#11), were digitally mastered with 24-bit technology from the original analog master tapes. "Fly Me to the Moon" (#10) was remastered from the digital master.

The international success of the world's greatest failure—poor Charlie Brown—has become one of the most phenomenal stories in publishing history. As the leading character in the comic strip *Peanuts*, Charlie Brown now attracts close to one hundred million readers each day in over seven hundred newspapers in the United States alone. We decided to produce a television documentary on *Peanuts* to try to discover why there is the world-wide fascination for Charlie Brown.

When we produced *A Man Named Mays*, the majority of the film developed from ad-lib discussions between writer-narrator Charles Einstein and baseball star Willie Mays. Consequently, when we began *A Boy Named Charlie Brown*, we had no script—no traditional “beginning, middle, and end”—and no actors.

We did have a narrator (San Francisco's Don Sherwood), and a musical conductor (Grammy Award winner Vince Guaraldi), and an animator, and director of photography, Sheldon Fay, Jr. But, as in the case of *Mays*, the majority of the film would come from ad-lib discussions with the creator of *Peanuts* himself, Charles Schulz.

Although we were avid fans of *Peanuts*, we of course had never met Mr. Schulz before production began. The Schulz family lives on a 28-acre ranch (in what has to be one of the most beautiful settings in the world), and Mr. Schulz's studio is just a few hundred feet from the main house.

Over the six-month period of production, we had the great pleasure of watching this famous artist both at work

and at play. It was a rewarding experience in more ways than just creating an entertaining film.

Charles Schulz is a rare breed of cat. First of all, he is a one-man production team—artist, humorist, writer, and social critic. Whether a drawing is for a comic strip or a greeting card or a documentary film, he does all the work himself. (In fact, his only assistant, secretary Sue Brodwell, spends most of her time answering fan mail for Charlie Brown from all over the world.)

Sparky, as his friends call Charles Schulz, would rather draw a good comic strip than do anything else. At the age of 48 and at the top of his profession, Sparky still gets a genuine thrill from producing each new comic strip, each new story line, each new joke, each new Charlie Brown disaster. In fact, his enthusiasm for *Peanuts* seems to grow each month. As he himself says in the film: “The artist must continue to grow—continue to be interested in everything—continue to see and learn new things—if his work is to improve.”

The most fascinating thing we learned in our first meeting with Sparky is that he considers Charlie Brown to be just about one hundred percent Charles Schulz.

“It's kind of embarrassing sometimes,” he said, “that a hundred million people are reading each day about the dumb things I did as a kid. Most of the things I write about in *Peanuts* come from my own childhood experiences.”

Sparky recalled how, as a youngster, he had been promoted (jumped ahead) two elementary grades.

Because of this rapid promotion, Sparky suddenly was the youngest and the smallest in his class. He was ignored and rebuffed by the older, bigger children, and the “birth” of Charlie Brown took place at this time.

Also, because of the rapid jump ahead, Sparky's grades began to suffer, and his scholastic struggle was to plague him throughout high school. He managed to flunk at least one subject during each of his four high school years. Only his desire to be an artist sustained him through this discouraging period. Too discouraged to continue a formal education after high school, Sparky answered a newspaper advertisement and enrolled with the Art Instruction School of nearby Minneapolis. (The Schulz family grew up in St. Paul, Minnesota, where Sparky's father has been a barber for over 40 years.) Too introverted to personally visit the instructors at the Art School just a few miles away, Sparky took the entire two-year art course by mail!

World War II found Charles Schulz in Europe as a member of a light-machine gun squad, and, after the war, Sparky returned to St. Paul to resume his career in art.

But for over a year, Sparky was unable to find work in the St. Paul-Minneapolis area. Time and time again, he was turned down by both newspapers and magazines.

He became so disheartened that he seriously considered giving up his goal to be an artist. However, an editor of a children's magazine finally gave Sparky a job ... lettering in the balloons of other comic strips in the magazine. This was the first real job ... the first break... the beginning.

And then some more “breaks” came the way of Charles Schulz in the late 1940s. The Art Instruction School hired him as a part-time instructor. And a St. Paul newspaper began to run his comic strip—*Little Folks*—as a once-a-week feature.

And to Sparky's astonishment—the *Saturday Evening Post* bought one of his cartoons, a simple drawing of a little boy using a footstool that he obviously didn't need.

As the *Saturday Evening Post* ran a few more Schulz cartoons, and as his own confidence grew, Sparky marched into the St. Paul newspaper and demanded that his weekly feature be increased to a daily feature. And, in the true tradition of Charlie Brown, he was fired! Sparky decided to take a “thousand to one shot,” and he bundled up his best work and submitted it to United Feature Syndicate in New York.

For many years a leading distributor of comic strips throughout the world, United Feature had developed such international favorites as *Nancy and Tarzan*. United Feature receives hundreds of “would-be” comic strips each year, but only one in a thousand ever makes a newspaper page.

However, United Feature's editorial director Jim Freeman liked what he saw from Charles Schulz of St. Paul, Minnesota. And United decided to gamble with Charlie Brown.

In 1950, United Feature named the comic strip *Peanuts*, and it was introduced in eight newspapers across the

United States. The success of *Peanuts* was unparalleled in comic strip history. Within six years—in 1956—Charles Schulz, at the age of 33, received the highest award of his profession—the Reuben Award—as the National Cartoonist Society selected him as Cartoonist of the Year.

Within a decade, *Peanuts* became the most quoted, the most discussed American comic strip. And the characters in *Peanuts* have become as familiar to most people as their own children: There is Charlie Brown himself, the world's greatest failure, who has lost ten thousand checker games in a row, not to mention nine hundred and eighty-three straight baseball games.

And there is Lucy Van Pelt, Miss International Fuss Budget, who tries to run the "gang" by yelling the loudest, kicking the hardest, or pretending to know all the answers to everything. (She so infuriated the Italian Communist Press that, in 1963, the Communists branded her a Fascist and demanded her removal from Italian newsstands.)

Next is Linus Van Pelt (Lucy's younger brother), whose world-famous security blanket goes wherever Linus goes. He must constantly defend the blanket from Lucy's attempts to burn it, freeze it, or bury it. But Linus's chief threat comes from Charlie Brown's dog Snoopy, a sort of beagle Walter Mitty, who dreams of being everything from a vulture to a great hunter, and whose daily target is the blanket.

But Snoopy spends most of his time atop his doghouse contemplating the state of affairs in the world.

And then there is Schroeder, the musical prodigy, who spends most of his time practicing the music of his idol—Ludwig van Beethoven. (And it takes a lot of practice when you realize that the black keys on his toy piano are just painted on.)

Singlehandedly, Schroeder has campaigned for national recognition of his hero, and, as a result, Beethoven Birthday Parties are now celebrated around the world.

In our documentary, *A Boy Named Charlie Brown*, we attempted to capture the spirit of both the comic strip and its creator, because *Peanuts* is not merely good entertainment. *Peanuts* has, to some degree, become representative of the human race.

The characters in *Peanuts* feel the same tensions and pressures that we all feel and that our children all feel.

And Charlie Brown, of course, keeps right on failing at everything he does. But poor old Charlie Brown never gives up. And, because he represents so many of us in so many ways, we hope that he never will.

—Lee Mendelson

These notes appeared in the original album liner.

JAZZ IMPRESSIONS OF VINCE GUARALDI

The hardest task an artist faces is not just to achieve self-expression; that almost comes by definition even if it's difficult to hone that self-expression into something good enough to be art.

It is another kind of thing altogether—and it strikes me as more difficult—to look at, hear, feel and experience somebody else's artistic expression and then make something of your own which shows empathy, which relates to the other but which still has your own individual artistic stamp.

This is what, it seems to me, Vince Guaraldi achieved with his score for Charlie Brown. He took his inspiration from the creations of Charles Schulz and made music that reflects that inspiration, is empathetic with the image and is still solidly and unmistakably Vince Guaraldi.

It was natural for him to do this—he's been reading *Peanuts* for years in the *Chronicle*, as who hasn't?—but he brought some very special talent along to the process.

Vince has big ears, a wide range of feeling and a poetically lyrical manner and playing and of writing jazz music. Off stage he's flip and funny, salty and serious and sometimes stubborn. At the piano, he's all music, all lyricism and all jazz.

In the Educational Television three-part film, *Anatomy of a Hit*, Vince was shown as a sensitive introspective little man whose dreams became music. This is true. Ever since he was a student at San Francisco State College he has dreamed music and music has been his dream. In the years of apprenticeship he spent with Cal Tjader and Woody Herman and with his own group (until he hit the big time with *Jazz Impressions of Black Orpheus* and "Cast Your Fate to the Wind") Vince learned the hard lesson of how to transmit those dreams from his emotions and his mind through his hands to the keyboard.

Jazz is a music of individualism. As such it is truly a music of people, not styles. Each person develops his own sound, his own voice, his own musical personality which, with some, is expressed only in their own playing. With Vince, the personal sound, the personal voice and the individual musical personality is expressed not only in his playing but in his composing as well.

All the characters in *Peanuts* are artists confronted with the illogical, blind and mechanistic world. It was natural that Vince Guaraldi's music should fit so well.

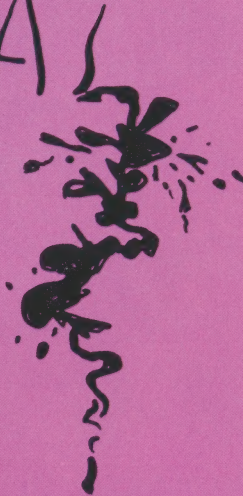
—Ralph J. Gleason

These notes appeared in the original album liner.

DEAR

PEN

PA



SCAULZ

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